

SPECIAL MEETING
MINUTES
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
APRIL 27, 2012 – 12:15 P.M.
TOWN HALL ANNEX – COMMUNITY ROOM 2

I. ROLL CALL

Present: Fafard, Obrey, Mathanool, Dowling, Kadri, Smith
Staff: Strother
Other: Town Manager Oefinger, City Mayor Galbraith, Council Liaison Johnson, RTM Liaison DeMatto, Eric Beeson, IT Staff; Robert Frink, Citizen

Dominick Ianno, Director, Public Affairs, Global Sites, Pfizer, Inc.; Michael Allier, Director, Global Procurement & Operations Team Pfizer Groton; Warren Braverman, Transitions Manager, Consultant; Jonathan Putnam, Executive Director Cushman & Wakefield of Connecticut.

II. PUBLIC COMMUNICATION – None

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF MARCH 15, 2012

MOTION: To approve the March 15, 2012 minutes.

Motion made by Obrey, seconded by Kadri, so voted unanimously.

IV. ITEMS OF BUSINESS

1. Discussion with Realtor Jonathan Putnam Regarding Available Pfizer Buildings

The Commission noted that they had invited representatives of Pfizer and Cushman and Wakefield, the real estate firm which is listing Pfizer available buildings, to the meeting in an effort to learn what activities have been undertaken regarding the available buildings, and to determine ways in which the EDC and the Town and City can assist and be goodwill ambassadors for these sites.

Dominick Ianno, Michael Allier, Warren Braverman, and Jonathan Putnam, were present for the discussion. Dominick Ianno noted that Pfizer values their relationship with the Groton community and they want to have open communications going forward. He noted that the shrinking workforce that was created by moving some functions to Cambridge, Massachusetts has created the available space and buildings.

The group first discussed Building 126, an older laboratory building on Eastern Point Road, which is scheduled for demolition by the end of May, with site clearance to occur following demolition. The building had been renovated several times, and was not energy efficient or easily adaptable from its previous use. It also was not a good site for multi-tenant use. Marketing efforts did not attract a viable user for the building.

A demolition permit has also been issued for Building 156, but the intention for that building is to demolish some areas and renovate the space for a tenant which is currently housed in Building 118.

Building 118 is the largest building that will be available at 755,000 square feet (a complex of several connected buildings). This building was the original research and

development headquarters. Pfizer has listed the building for lease or sale and is looking for a single renter or buyer. The building could accommodate 900-1,000 employees.

Building 114 (known as the ice cube building) is a 26,000 square foot 2-story office building located outside the Pfizer gates which fronts on Eastern Point Road. The building was renovated in the late 1990's and is considered highly marketable.

Building 266 is a single-story 24,000 square foot building located inside the security perimeter of Pfizer and includes 60 percent laboratory space. It has been on the market for about 6 months.

Building 288 is near the visitors' center and is a high use laboratory environment. It is approximately 16,000 square feet in size and has been on the market for 2-3 months.

It was noted that the Groton site will still be home to the Center for Discovery and Development for the entire company and this function is only done in this one location. Michael Lallier reported that Pfizer is still investing millions of dollars in upgrading some of the buildings, and employs 3,500 and approximately 2,000 contractors.

Discussion took place about utilizing some of the available space for incubators. While that might be a potential use, it was noted that some entity would have to oversee an incubator program rather than Pfizer leasing space to various incubator tenants.

The EDC and Town and City representatives expressed their concern about the impact that this downsizing will have on the community and their desire to help in any way they can to market these sites. The Pfizer/real estate representatives felt that labor and tax incentives would be helpful. Mark Oefinger noted that this property is in the Town's Enterprise Zone and rail access is still active, and Mayor Galbraith highlighted the fact that this is a utility rich area. It was also requested that, if possible, Pfizer identify other incentives/programs that would be helpful. It was noted that having one community contact person to Pfizer would be helpful, and it was decided that Town Manager Mark Oefinger would be that person.

2. Website Update

The web page subcommittee reviewed the work done to date on the Economic Development portion of the Town's web page and distributed information on the status and next steps. It was noted that the project is progressing very well thanks to the excellent efforts of Eric Beeson, Brian Hancock, Barbara Strother and the web page subcommittee. The group has also discussed the recommendations put forward by Thor Torgersen, owner and creative director of Pyramid Marketing. The subcommittee is working on how to best incorporate his input while meeting the time and resource constraints of the project. An overview of the draft updated web page was provided by Eric Beeson. It was noted that the web site will be continually enhanced and improved in subsequent phases.

3. Zoning Commission Referrals

Staff noted that 2 referrals were received for Zoning Commission referrals after the EDC agenda package was sent out (May 2, 2012 Public Hearings).

MOTION: To add Zoning Commission Special Permit Applications #326 and #327 to the EDC agenda.

Motion made Dowling, seconded by Smith and so voted unanimously.

Staff provided an overview of the special permit applications, and after discussion, the following actions were taken:

Special Permit #326, 4 Pearl Street (Leo Roche, Applicant)

MOTION: The Economic Development Commission supports the proposed expansion to this business. The EDC understands that other local review and approvals will be required.

Motion made by Dowling, seconded by Smith, and so voted unanimously.

Special Permit #327, 11 Water Street and 13 Water Street, Mystic (Mystic Ledge Real Estate, LLC, Owner)

MOTION: The Economic Development Commission supports the proposed addition of an outdoor seating area, stairway and wood fence for use as a waiting area for this restaurant, (which is being proposed to ease those waiting for seats from congregating in the front area of the restaurant site). The Commission understands that other local review and approvals will be required.

Motion made by Dowling, seconded by Mathanool and so voted unanimously.

V. ADJOURNMENT

The Meeting adjourned at 2:35 p.m.

George Mathanool Secretary
Economic Development Commission

Prepared by Barbara Strother
Economic Development Specialist